

NAEB

PRESIDENT'S MEMO

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTERS

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THE FORD BOMB - Fission and Fall Out

The recent announcement by the Ford Foundation of \$6 million grant to the Center to "strengthen programs on non-commercial television stations" (and simultaneously withdraw from other types of support for radio and television) has had immediate and wide-spread repercussions in the educational broadcasting field. The initial consequences were to split off various elements of the Center's operation, leaving a nucleus of activity centered around the provision of five hours of high quality ETV programs per week. Sloughed off were: radio, instructional TV, Washington representation, and general welfare activities in behalf of the TV stations.

Immediate fall-out effects were the separation of BFA from the Center, the termination of support for ERN, and phasing out of the National Instructional TV Library.

Secondary consequences were the immediate consideration by people in the field of what the impact of these altered circumstances would be, what new structures or organizational patterns should be developed to fill the gaps; there was even some galvanic action.

INSTRUCTIONAL TV

Anticipating the premature discontinuance of the Center's contract for the National Instructional TV Library, a series of regional meetings were held across the country to consider what the appropriate criteria should be for selecting a new location and auspices for the national service. Results of these conferences will be presented to the Advisory Committee for the Educational Media Branch of USOE (October 16-18). On the basis of this advice, the Branch will issue "specifications" and interested parties will be invited to make proposals.

RADIO

Representatives of NAEB, BFA, and ERN met in Washington to consider what might be done about continuing some sort of "live" interconnection activity for radio. The upshot was the development of an expanded concept of adding radio into a bundle of communication services for higher education which could be provided by electronic interconnection. Besides radio broadcasting, such a system linking institutions of higher education would facilitate sharing of human and material resources, cooperative research, conduct of conferences, cooperative use of computers, and the rapid collection, retrieval, and exchange of information.

A request has been submitted to USOE for a Title VII Grant to fund a study of the feasibility of such a national communications system for radio and specialized academic functions. The NAEB radio seminar to be held in Chicago, in January, will center its deliberations around this development - one which has already won widespread expressions of interest and approval by university presidents, government officials, and communications specialists.

BROADCAST TELEVISION

This fall's meeting of the Center Affiliates (October 5-8) was fraught with expectancy and uncertainty, some concern and considerable resolution.

The Ford-Center move to, in effect, "give" them a specialized program service and nothing more, meant that stations now had "released" money to spend but also that they were now on their own; they must make their own decision on how best to proceed to protect their welfare and insure their continued growth and well-being.

At the meeting of the previous fall, the Affiliates Committee was directed to come in with a recommendation as to what organizational structure was best suited to serve the ETV stations; in light of the Ford-Center move, this matter now took on enhanced importance. In discharging its responsibility, the Committee agreed to a hearing for the NAEB president and subsequently invited him to address the Affiliates and distribute a memorandum. This was entitled:

NAEB and ETV: A NEW OPPORTUNITY

This memorandum identified two major needs which new policy directions of NETRC have created. (1) The need for stronger representation for ETV stations in Washington and (2) the need for a mutually-operated ETV station Program Library Service to supplement the specialized NET offerings.

NAEB proposed to meet these needs in two ways:

1. The establishment of a TV Station Division (as a part of the proposed new NAEB organizational structure to be voted on at Milwaukee) as an autonomous operation affording TV stations maximum pursuit of their particular aims (without dilution in the concerns of the total membership) and a means of developing a Washington office with such staffing and service as they desire and are willing to pay for.

The memo then lists suggested services which such an operation might provide in Washington (political, education, legal and engineering consultation, station activation, and information) together with the supporting service NAEB Headquarters would provide to reinforce the work of the TV Division. Suggested budget: \$114,750.

2. The Television Program Library is described as a self-supporting, low-cost, mutual operation which would be set up at some member university and to which stations would contribute their outstanding programs. For a basic fee they would be able to select 80 hours of programs per year, with additional hours paid for at a proportional hourly rate. A one-time-only capital investment fee would be assessed at the time of joining the service in order to establish the necessary

stockpile of tapes and office equipment. Suggested budget: \$53,306. On the basis of 40 stations, annual cost per station would be \$1,335 and cost per hour (on basis of 80 hours of programs per year) would be \$16.70.

The Affiliates Committee recommended that a separate organization be established in Washington to represent ETV stations, indicating that on the basis of individual experience of members of the Committee, that the NAEB structure, Board organization, and general lack of effectiveness precluded the likelihood of the NAEB proposal being successful.

A good deal of discussion ensued pro and con NAEB and the NAEB proposal. Before long it was clear that there was general consensus on objectives and the differences were only on methodology. After a straw vote, it was agreed that a list of points be worked out with the NAEB relative to organizing the TV stations within the proposed new structure of the Association. A report of these discussions is to be presented to the TV Station managers at Milwaukee.

In my judgment, the New York discussions were most beneficial. There was a good deal of useful catharsis, a reaffirmation of confidence in NAEB as the appropriate agency within which to organize; and the conference ended with a general feeling of closing ranks and going forward together in building a strong new enterprise for ETV stations within a strengthened Association.

STATUS OF NDEA EXTENSION

October 8 the Senate by an 80-4 vote passed HR4955, which provides for a three-year extension of the National Defense Education Act, plus other provisions for Federally impacted areas and vocational education. Importance of NDEA to educational communications people is that its Title VII provides funds for research and dissemination projects in educational media. During its first five years, the Educational Media Branch has expended over \$20 million in underwriting research on new teaching tools, especially TV. NAEB has received contracts totalling approximately a quarter of a million dollars for projects of national scope and many of its member institutions have been able to undertake valuable research projects with such USOE grants.

Since the House version provided only for expansion of the vocational education program, the measure must now go to conference; however, unless the House unanimously agrees to this procedure, it will be necessary for the House Rules Committee to determine whether to send it to conference. Because Chairman Howard Smith (D, Va.) is known to oppose some of the expansion now contained in HR4955, this may be difficult. The members of the House Rules Committee are listed below. If you are in the home state of a member, you may wish to check with him to see if he is fully aware of the importance of this legislation to your schools and colleges. If you are not located in a home state of a member, you may wish to suggest that your Congressman contact members of the Rules Committee.

Rules Committee of U. S. House of Representatives

Democrats

Howard W. Smith (Va.), Chairman
William M. Colmer (Miss.)
Ray J. Madden (Ind.)
James J. Delaney (N.Y.)
James W. Trimble (Ark.)
Homer Thornberry (Texas)
Richard Bolling (Mo.)
Thomas P. O'Neill (Mass.)
Carl Elliott (Ala.)
B. F. Sisk (Calif.)

Republicans

Clarence J. Brown (Ohio)
Katharine St. George (N.Y.)
H. Allen Smith (Calif.)
Elmer J. Hoffman (Ill.)
William H. Avery (Kans.)

THE REPORT OF THE GEORGIA REGENTS

The "reply direct" of the Georgia University regents to the request of the Georgia Association of Broadcasters, Inc. re operation of WGTV, is an important milestone in ETV development and one that deserves widespread recognition and approval.

The commercial broadcasters of Georgia had asked the Regents to (1) create an advisory group, including commercial broadcasters, for the development of ETV (2) eliminate all "entertainment" type programs, (3) abolish the showing of University of Georgia athletic events.

Because of its importance and the possible uses other educational station operators, both radio and TV, might have for such a statement in handling similar situations, I am reproducing the substance of the Regents report here.

"As to the formation of an advisory group, we think that this would be contrary to the rules and regulations of the FCC. As licensee of the station, the Regents are obligated to determine the program policies and they could not properly delegate this function to any outside group.

The elimination of all entertainment as such over the station... would in our opinion be contrary to the rules and regulations of the Commission.

The broadcast of feature films by non-commercial educational television stations does not violate any rule or regulation of the FCC. In fact, Section 3.621 (c) of the rules reads as follows: ("Non-commercial educational television broadcast stations may transmit educational, cultural and entertainment programs, and programs designed for use by schools and school systems in connection with regular school courses, as well as routine and administrative material pertaining thereto.")

"The representative of the GAB named two feature films that he objected to as not having any cultural value. If only two of the films shown have had objectionable qualities then we feel the program director has done a creditable job. However, it is the opinion of your committee that no films should be televised without a preview by some responsible member of the program department....

The GAB objects to WGTV's showing films of football games. These films are shown on Thursday night following the game played on the previous Saturday. These films are secured by WGTV from television station WAGA-TV without cost, and all commercials are cut from the films.

Conclusions

1. A committee of the Board of Regents should be created that would represent the Board for the purpose of complying with the rules and regulations of the FCC. This committee should make periodic studies of the program content and any other pertinent matters.
2. It is advisable that some entertainment be continued on WGTV as in the past, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the FCC. We do not think that our Board is in a position, always, to determine the exact distinction between cultural films and entertainment films as such. All would agree, we feel, that many films are entertaining as well as educational.
3. We see no reason why the University of Georgia Football games should not be continued over WGTV on Thursday nights, as long as they have been shown, previously, on the commercial stations.
4. This committee recommends that the Board of Regents express their appreciation to the GAB for bringing this matter to our attention. Certainly the GAB understands that FCC rules which require complete control of programming policies must at all times be the obligation of the Licensee. However, the Board of Regents will welcome the views of commercial television broadcasters at all times. The Board suggests that the GAB appoint a committee to study the programming of the educational television stations and contact the committee of the Board of Regents if and when the GAB may have any complaints." (End quote)

All educational broadcasters are in the debt of Manager Jerry Appy for making this stand, and the Georgia Board of Regents for its forthright statement of the principle of the right and responsibility of educators to determine what is educational.

Scanned from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters Records
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